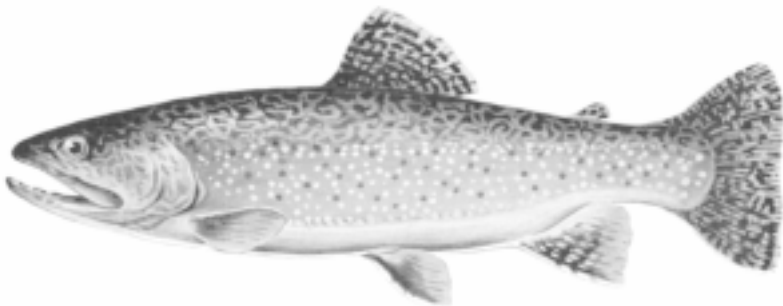


EASTERN BROOK TROUT  
*Salvelinus fontinalis*

—From a painting by Charles Bradford Hudson, 1910

## **EASTERN BROOK TROUT**

*Salvelinus fontinalis*



### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

The back and sides are usually dark olive green. Light spots on the sides are large and nearly round. On the back the light spots turn to wavy lines, which are very characteristic of the brook trout.

The dorsal fin has dark wavy lines rather than spots. This is a good distinguishing characteristic.

There are usually red spots on the sides, but these may be indistinct in some brook trout from lakes.

The ventral and anal fins usually have distinct white borders along the anterior margins.

Brook trout at spawning time usually have considerable orange-red on the belly. This is more pronounced in the males and at such times they are extremely colorful.

The scales are very small and not easily seen.

The brook trout shown above is a male at breeding time. Females have shorter jaws, and younger fish have somewhat different body proportions. (See illustration on page 41.)

### **DISTRIBUTION IN CALIFORNIA**

The eastern brook trout has been scattered by hatchery planting from the San Bernardino Mountains of southern California northward to the Oregon line. A large part of the waters in the State have been planted with this species, but it has not become well established except in high mountain lakes and in the small streams of mountain meadows. It does not do well in California waters lying much below 4,000 feet and is found more commonly at elevations between 5,000 and 9,000 feet.

## INTERESTING FACTS

This trout is particularly well fitted for life in those mountain lakes of California which have no permanent tributary streams in which fish can spawn. The eastern brook trout does not require stream water and can spawn very successfully in springs on lake bottoms. Most lakes have some such springs and an initial planting of fingerlings is often enough to establish the fish; from then on, natural propagation may be sufficient. For some reason, this species of trout does not grow to as large a size in California as it does in many parts of the East. There may be some who will disagree, but it is generally conceded that pan-size brookies from our high mountain lakes can be the finest flavored of all our trout. The reason the official name is eastern brook trout is because it was brought to California from the eastern United States. In early-day California, native rainbow in small streams were often called brook trout and so it seemed wise to call the importation eastern brook trout.

This trout was originally described by Samuel Mitchell in 1815 from fish caught near New York City and named *fontinalis*, which means "living in springs".



Castle Lake, Siskiyou County, with Mt. Shasta in the background. This 48-acre lake contains both rainbow and eastern brook trout. It is an experimental lake of the California Department of Fish and Game in which management techniques are field tested.